

Macario's noche buena



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Nobody knew anything about Macario's early life; but everybody knew that he was a robber, the chief of a gang which used to haunt the country about the shores of Laguna De Bay and rob merchants coming from Manila. It was in the days when no railroad line existed in the Philippines, when all trips by water had to be made by bancas, cascos, and small, slow steamboats, and all overland journeys had to be made in carromatas, carts, or on horseback. Macario was known to be the fiercest among the highwaymen. He had foiled all attempts of the guardias civiles to capture him. A price was set on his head.

It was nine o'clock on a Christmas eve. The past week macario and his gang had had plenty to do, for it was the week when many merchants went to manila and back to their towns. Macario was alone. He stationed himself in a grove of bamboo trees a little distance from the solitary road some miles from the town of Calamba. The night was dark and a cool wind was blowing across the lonely fields, making the bamboo tops bend and wave. What was there strange NT the sound of the wind as it sighed among the bamboo leaves? nothing! Only that it had a remorseful sound, as of an upbraiding conscience daring to assert itself.

That sound was most disquieting to the nerves it made Macario restless. He wished someone would come up the road, someone that would make him turn that restless into action. He even wished that some guardias civiles would come, he wished to drown the voice of that wind in the excitement of a fight. While he was walking back and forth among the bamboo trees, he heard the sound of hoof beats in the distance. " Ah" said he, " I shall have my wish at last". He went nearer the road and stood beside a tree. When the

hoof beats sounded nearer, he discerned a dark object, hardly perceptible in the obscurity around.

" Halt" cried Macario as he rushed toward that moving figure. " Halt or you are dead man! " the hoof beats ceased simultaneously with his cry Macario found himself face to face with a man riding on a horse. The man was alone. There was nothing martial about him, he was a merchant and he had two baskets on each side of his horse. The bandit took the horse by the bridle without a word and led it across the fields to the door of a nipa shack. " I want money," Macario said as soon as they were inside the shack and he had brought in the baskets.

The man gave him five pesos saying that he had no more. The robber then proceeded to open the baskets and examine their contents, which were mostly groceries. The merchant had gone to Manila expressily to buy these, not for sale, because he dealt only in cloth, but to regale his friends, his many nephews, nieces, cousins and his own children the next day, Christmas. The robber felt to the very bottom of a basket and drew out a large box. He opened it. It contained toys of all sorts-two or three dolls of different sizes, small green carriages drawn by red horses and a little drum.

He took the drum and seemed to forget everything else as he held it. He regarded it with wistfulness, turned it round and round, tried beating it; it absorbed his whole interest. What was there peculiar about a drum or about THE DRUM MACARIO WAS HOLDING? Ah! There are strong associations that can be awakened by small objects. The memory of our meeting with lost friend may be brought home to us by the sight of a simple flower; an

alphabet book may recall to mind the long, tedious hours with a cruel school master, and the past may be revived by a trifling toy.

Macario saw in the drum not a toy but an object associated with his early life. His mind traveled back, back to a small barrio in a distant province, to a particular time, to a certain Christmas day. He saw a little boy going to his godfather's. He was wearing chinelas for the first time; they were red chinelas. He had a jusi shirt on, and a small buri hat. The little boy kissed his godfather's hand. The godfather took a little drum from a package and gave it to the boy, together with a half-peso piece. The little boy was himself.

He was hum playing boy, together with little boys dressed in the same way; he heard him beating his drum and telling his playmates about the big star which he had seen in church that morning, the star which started from the choir and moved up to the altar; and of the little baby lying down on some grass, and of the little sheep and goats there; yes, as the altar he saw little goats. Other Christmas pictures came up before his mind in quick succession-picture in which he saw himself, each time older and grown larger. Then came one scene, the scene he had always dreaded, the scene which he would not have

Recalled for all the treasures he had stolen during his robber life and for what he might yet steal. It was Christmas eve again. He was now a tall young man. He was lurking among some trees near a path in a country district. He was mad, his blood was boiling; his long sharp bolo was thirsting for blood as his heart thirsted for vengeance. The wind was blowing among the leaves of the trees; it incited him to more furious thoughts. Then his

strained ears heard a sound, a snatch from an old country song. Ah! It was his enemy, singing; he who made this Christmas eve miserable for him.

Macario asked nothing, explained nothing, he simply dashed forward to his enemy and made the long bolo work out his revenge. He saw his enemy fall, saw the body steeped in its own blood. He ran, ran.... The dreaded tulisan, stopping with his head in his hands, stood up and ran, ran out of the shack into the fields, into the road, into the arms of two guardias civiles! In the same town some little children were unhappy although they received a peso from their father. The little boy did wish so much to get a drum and the little girls wanted dolls very badly.

First of all, a short story usually only has one main character. There may be more than one character in the story, but there is only one central person who undergoes a change or realization by the end of the story. In the story "Macario's Noche-Buena", there are a couple of characters, comprised by the robber Macario, the rider on horseback whom Macario robbed, and two guardia civiles who appeared at the end of the story. We can say that Macario was main character because the whole story revolved around him and his past experiences.

He also experienced a change/realization because in the story, because he reminisces about his life as a child and how happy he was then. It was also mentioned that, "The little boy did wish so much to get a drum..." Maybe the little boy could be compared to Macario, who realized what he had become. Maybe all he wanted for Christmas was to go back to his life as a child where he didn't have to steal and where life was so simple and fun.

Next, a short story has only one main plot, unlike a lot of novels whose plots divide into subplots and divide even further into more subplots.

Basically, the plot of " Macario's Noche-Buena" is the current life of Macario as a thief, and his memories of his youth. The story starts on December 24th, Noche-Buena. Macario is hiding in a grove of bamboo trees waiting for someone to pass. After some time, a man on horseback arrived, whom Macario ordered to give him his money. He only had five pesos so Macario opened the bag that the man was carrying. In the bag, Macario found some groceries, but more importantly there also was also an assortment of toys. Some dolls, carriages, and a little drum.

Macario got hold of the drum and then remembered the little drum that his grandfather had given him for Christmas many years back. After that, more memories rushed in, one when he was a young adult, where he was holding a bloodied bolo and a dead man in front of him. After this, it is stated in the story that he ran, and after some distance he was caught by two guardia civiles, and then the story ends. Third, a short story has only one main setting. In this case, most of the story happens on a road with a patch of bamboo trees beside it.

There is no longer a change of location like many longer narratives. This story focuses mainly on Macario's actions and memories, the setting is not really important in " Macario's Noche-Buena" Lastly, the theme of most short stories contains a moral lesson to be learned. In " Macario's Noche-Buena", Macario is a robber who on Christmas Eve finally realizes how much he has changed. From a happy young boy, he has turned into a man who steals toys

meant to be given to children for Christmas. In this moment he remembers being given toys for Christmas by his Grandfather.

The moral of the story is that even if you are driven into a corner and forced to do something evil, you should remember that there are also other human beings like you who will be affected by the decisions you make. His miserable memories made him steal and kill and thereby the author is concluding the story in a meaningful way to show the very cause of his wrong deeds—" In the same town some little children were unhappy although they each received a peso from their father. The little boy did wish so much to get a drum and the little girls wanted dolls very badly. "